Sri Krishna Kathamrita

Bindu

Issue 592

The Nature of Lord Shiva



www.gopaljiu.org



Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 592 — *Śrī Vijaya Ekādaśī* — 24 February 2025

Highlights

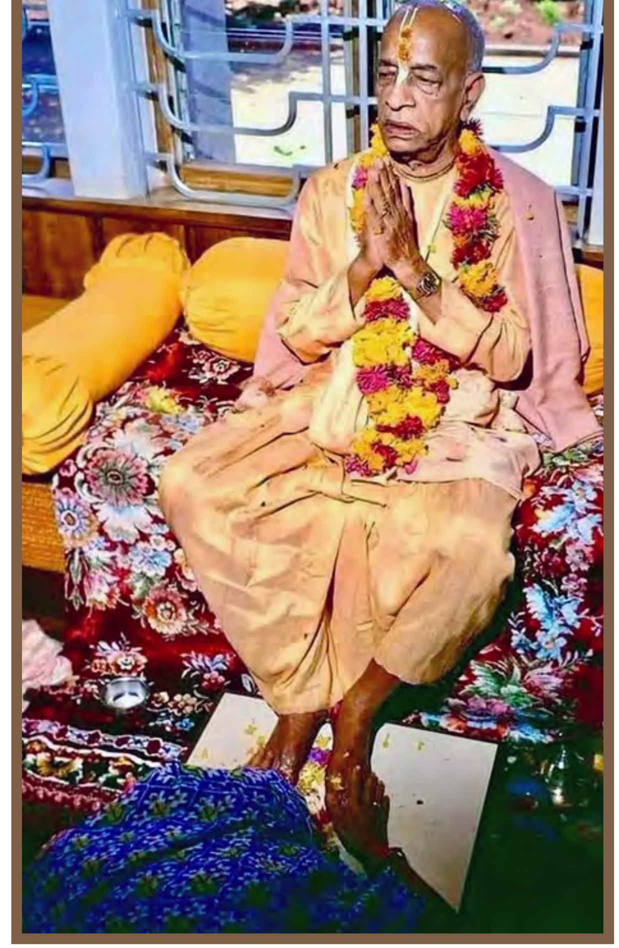


Shiva is the Ideal Husband



His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The specific example of Bhavani is very significant. Bhavani means the wife of Bhava, or Lord Shiva. Bhavani, or Parvati, the daughter of the King of the Himalayas, selected Lord Shiva, who appears to be just like a beggar, as her husband. In spite of her being a princess, she undertook all kinds of tribulations to associate with Lord Shiva, who did not even have a house, but was sitting underneath the trees and passing his time in meditation. Although Bhavani was the daughter of a very great king, she used to serve Lord Shiva just like a poor woman. Similarly, Devahuti was the daughter of an emperor, Svayambhuva Manu, yet she preferred to accept Kardama Muni as her husband. She served him with great love and affection, and she knew how to please him. Therefore, she is designated here as *sādhvī*, which means "a chaste, faithful wife." Her rare example is the ideal of Vedic civilization. Every woman is expected to be as good and chaste as Devahuti or Bhavani.



Unkown photographer.

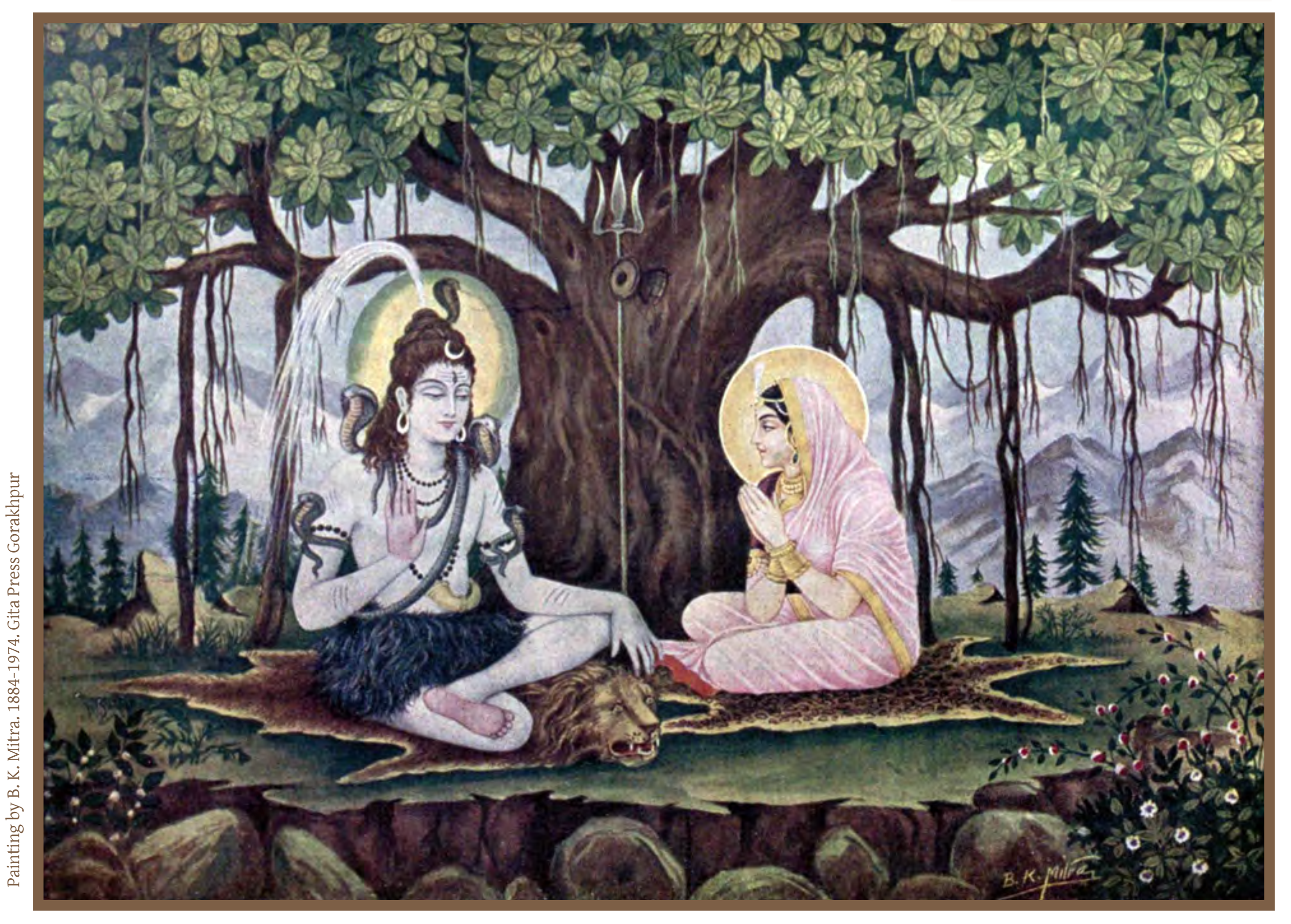
Cover: Bhairavi Ragini. Krishna watches Radha worshipping a Shiva linga. Pahari painting from Kishangarh. 1760.



Unknown artist. Pahari, circa 1840-1860.

Although he has no house and no wealth, Lord Shiva is considered to be the ideal husband because he is a great devotee of Krishna

Painting by B. K. Mitra. 1884-1974. Gita Press Gorakhpur



Lord Shiva with his wife Parvati

Today in Hindu society, unmarried girls are still taught to worship Lord Shiva with the idea that they may get husbands like him. Lord Shiva is the ideal husband, not in the sense of riches or sense gratification, but because he is the greatest of all devotees. *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ*: Shambhu, or Lord Shiva, is the ideal *vaiṣṇava*. He constantly meditates upon Lord Rama and chants *Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. Lord Shiva has a *vaiṣṇava sampradāya*, which is called the *Viṣṇu Svāmī-sampradāya*. Unmarried girls worship Lord Shiva so that they can expect a husband who is as good a *vaiṣṇava* as he. The girls are not taught to select a husband who is very rich or very opulent for material sense gratification; rather, if a girl is fortunate enough to get a husband as good as Lord Shiva in devotional service, then her life becomes perfect. The wife is dependent on the husband, and if the husband is a *vaiṣṇava*, then naturally she shares the devotional service of the husband because she renders him service. This reciprocation of service and love between husband and wife is the ideal of a householder's life.

— Purport to *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 3.23.1.

Shiva and the Devas as Non-different from Vishnu

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

A conversation with Kumara Sriyukta Saradindu Narayan

On 17 October 1928, during his stay at Shillong, Srila Prabhupada went to the "Age Hill" house of the learned landlord of Dinajapur, Kumara Sriyukta Saradindu Narayan Roy, M.A. Many disciples accompanied Srila Prabhupada to Kumara Bahadura's house. After greeting Srila Prabhupada as an ācārya, Kumara Sriyukta asked these questions.

Kumara: Where is the clear evidence that one's brahminical qualities are lost when one worships the demigods instead of Lord Vishnu?

Srila Prabhupada: *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is the crest jewel of all evidence. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.5.2-3) states:

mukha-bāhūru-pādebhyaḥ puruṣasyāśramaiḥ saha
catvāro jajñire varṇā guṇair viprādayaḥ pṛthak



Painting by B. K. Mitra. 1884-1974. Gita Press Gorakhpur

Hari-hara, the half Vishnu half Shiva form of the Lord

ya eṣāṁ puruṣaṁ sākṣād ātma-prabhavam īśvaram
na bhajanty avajānanti sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ

"From the mouth of Brahma, the brahminical order has come into existence. Similarly, from his arms the *kṣatriyas* have come, from his waist the *vaiśyas* have come, and from his legs the *śūdras* have come. These four orders and their spiritual counterparts [*brahmacarya, gṛhastha, vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*] combine to make human society complete. If one simply maintains an official position in the four *varṇas* and *āśramas* but does not worship the Supreme Lord Vishnu, he falls down from his puffed-up position into a hellish condition."

Kumara: They will say, "We do not disregard Vishnu; we worship Vishnu and we worship Vishnu's other forms as well."

Srila Prabhupada: There is no greater covered opposition to Vishnu than this. Only Lord Vishnu is fully independent. To consider the demigods, who are subordinate to Lord Vishnu, as equal to Vishnu, is nothing but aversion to Vishnu.

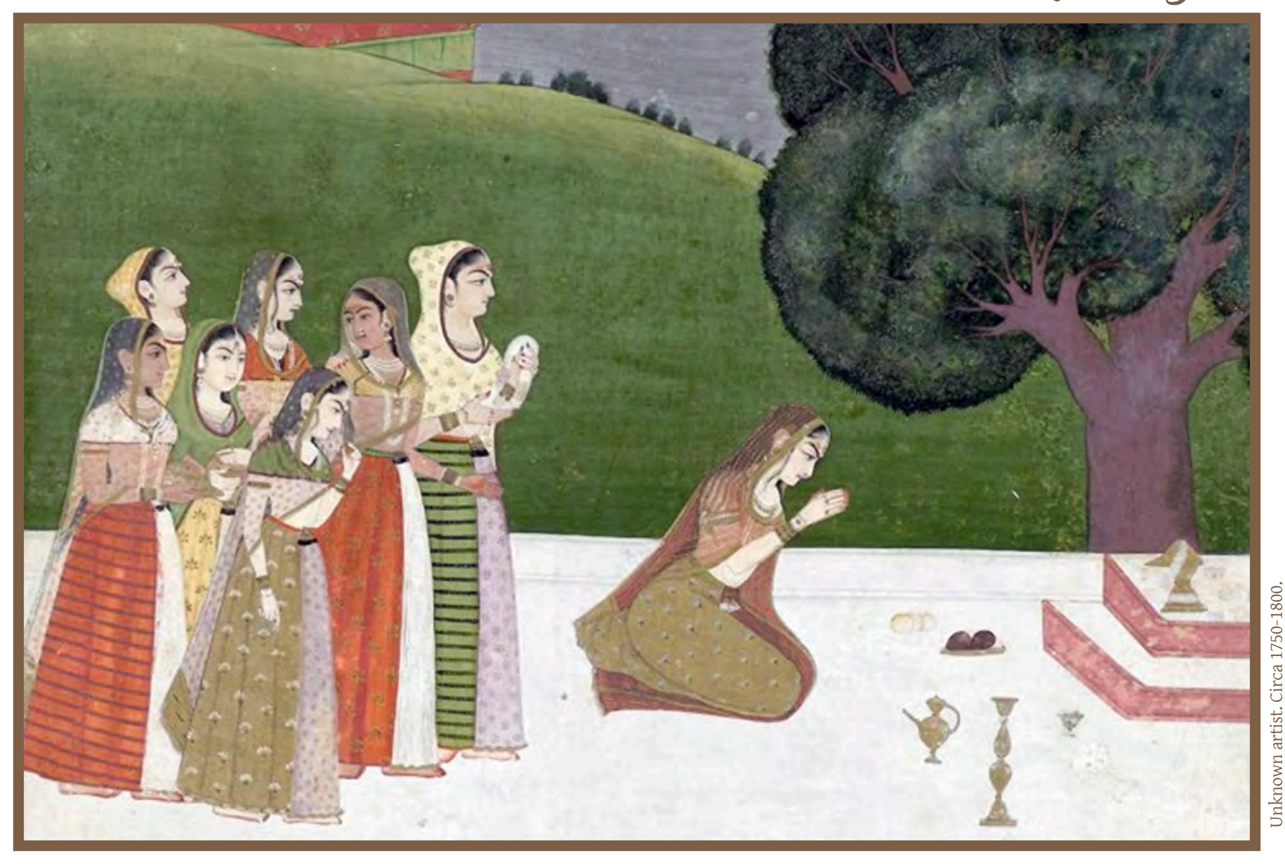
arcye viṣṇau śilā-dhīr guruṣu nara-matir vaiṣṇave jāti-buddhir
viṣṇor vā vaiṣṇavānāṁ kali-mala-mathane pāda-tīrthe 'mbu-buddhiḥ
śrī-viṣṇor nāmni mantre sakala-kaluṣa-he śabda-sāmānya-buddhir
viṣṇau sarveśvareśe tad-itara-sama-dhīr yasya vā nārakī saḥ

"One who thinks the deity in the temple to be made of wood or stone, who thinks of the spiritual master in the disciplic succession as an ordinary man, who thinks the *vaiṣṇava* in the *acyuta-gotra* to belong to a certain caste or creed, who thinks of *caraṇāmṛta* or Ganges water as ordinary water, or who considers the



Unknown artist. Circa 1734-1767.

Shiva and Krishna


Unknown artist. Circa 1750-1800.

The gopis worship Lord Shiva

hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra to be a material vibration is taken to be a resident of hell." (*Padma Purāṇa*)

yas tu nārāyaṇaṁ devaṁ brahma-rudrādi-daivataiḥ
samatvenaiva vīkṣeta sa pāṣaṇḍī bhaved dhruvam

"A person who considers demigods like Brahma and Shiva to be on an equal level with Narayana is to be considered an offender and an atheist." [*Padma Purāṇa,* quoted in *Cc. madhya* 18.115]

Kumara: Then how do you explain this statement:

śivasya śrī-viṣṇor ya iha guṇa-nāmādi-sakalaṁ
dhiyā bhinnaṁ paśyet sa khalu hari-nāmāhita-karaḥ

The person who with his intelligence sees difference between the qualities and names of Shiva and Vishnu (and other things as well) is an offender to the name of Vishnu. [*Padma Purāṇa Brahma khaṇḍa* 25.16]

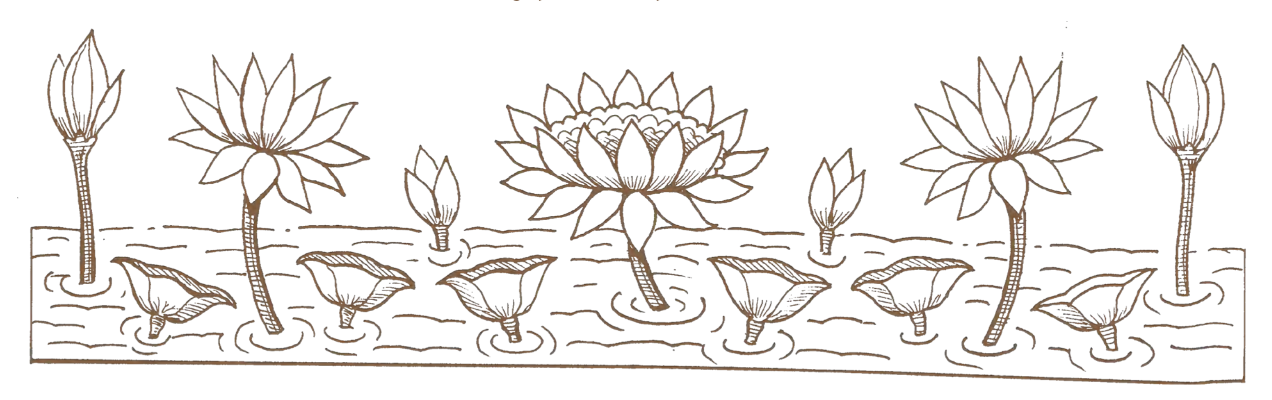
Srila Prabhupada: This statement refutes polytheism. One who finds a distinction between the all-auspicious holy names, forms, qualities, and pastimes of Lord Vishnu, or who thinks that like material objects, Vishnu's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes are different from Vishnu, or who sees demigods like Shiva as Vishnu's competitors, considering them independent of or nondifferent from him, cannot chant Vishnu's name. If he does chant the holy name, his chanting is only a pretension of chanting and is offensive to the holy name. This [offensive mentality] is certainly very harmful. Only those who have to concoct something about the impersonal Brahman and so consider Vishnu's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes as imaginary and temporary include Lord Vishnu as simply one of the five gods or as part of an imaginary group of many gods. This thinking is covered Buddhism, atheism, and is nothing but an attempt to oppose Lord Vishnu and the *vaiṣṇavas*. It is not Vishnu worship. Brahminical qualification cannot live in the attempt to oppose Vishnu. Brahmanas accept Lord Vishnu's eternal names, forms, qualities, and pastimes as well as his eternal worship. This is the purport of the Rg Veda mantra. The names of the many demigods are imaginary.

There is a distinction between the demigods' names and the demigods themselves. There are distinctions between their names, forms, qualities, and pastimes and themselves. But there is no difference between Krishna's name and Krishna himself, Krishna's name and Krishna's form, Krishna's name and Krishna's qualities, and Krishna's name and Krishna's pastimes.

— *Sarasvatī Saṅlapa. Uncommon Dialogues, Conversations & Discourses by His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada.* Translated by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Kolkata, India. 2016.

Unknown artist. Devagandhari Ragini of Hindol, from a Chamba Ragamala, c. 1700. Pahari painting from Himachal Pradesh.

The gopis worship Lord Shiva





Vintage painting by an unknown artist.

Parvati offers prayers to Lord Shiva

The Nature of Lord Shiva



Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

13. What are the activities of Lord Shiva?

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam verses such as *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ* [*Bhāg.* 12.13.16] glorify Shambhu as a *vaiṣṇava*. The purport of such statements is that Shambhu unites with Durga-devi according to his own time potency and the will of Govinda. Thus, he accomplishes his tasks. In many scriptures headed by the *tantras*, he teaches religious duties that are a ladder for the *jīvas* of various qualifications to come to *bhakti*, devotion. By Govinda's sweet will, Shambhu (indirectly) protects and sustains *śuddha-bhakti* or pure devotion by preaching the doctrine of *Māyāvāda* (illusionism) and intellectual or imaginary fabrications of the scriptures.

The fifty qualities of the *jīva* are present within Shambhu in copious proportion, and five more great qualities unattainable by the ordinary *jīva* are also found in him in partial proportion. So Shambhu cannot be categorized as a *jīva*; he is the lord of *jīvas* (*īśvara*) although he partakes of the nature of a separated part (*vibhinnāṁśa*) of the Supreme Lord. (*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.45)

14. Is Lord Shiva a separate truth from Krishna? What is the difference between Sadashiva and Rudra?

Shambhu is not another God separate from Krishna. Those who hold such a biased view are blasphemers of the Supreme Lord. Shambhu's control is subject to the control of Govinda, and so they are not really different from each other. Their nondifference is illustrated by the example of milk transformed into yoghurt by the addition of an agent; similarly, the Lord becomes transformed into another form. That form is dependent.

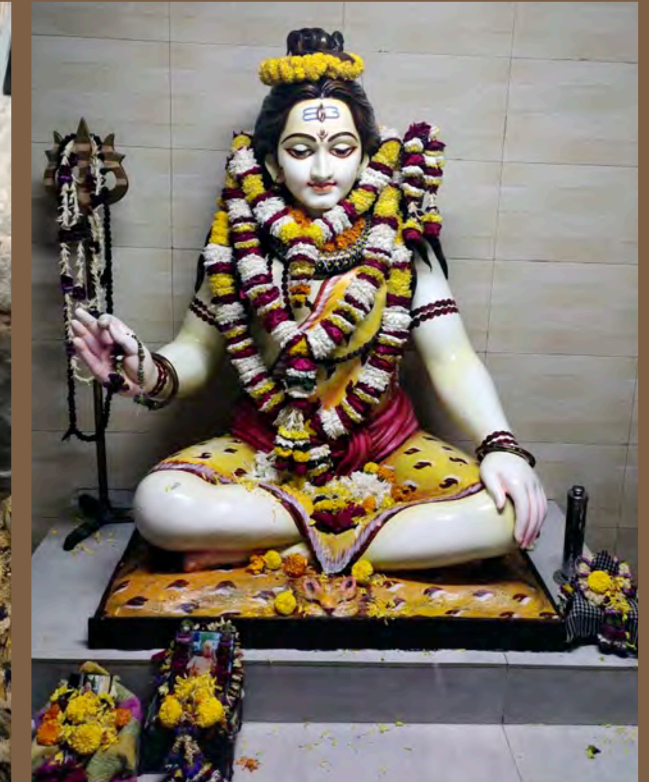
Tamoguṇa, the material quality of inertia, the quality of minuteness of the marginal potency, and a minute degree of a mixture of divine cognizance (*saṁvit*) and ecstasy (*hlādinī*) — all these elements combined constitute a particular transformation. The plenary portion of the Supreme Lord that is amalgamated with this transformation constitutes the halo of the divinity of Sadashiva, the masculine generative organ of Lord Shambhu, and from Shambhu, Rudradeva is manifest. (*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.45)

— *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava,* 22.13-14. Compiled by and with questions from Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Published by Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.



Photo by Madhavananda Das.

Old deity of Shiva near the Tota Gopinath temple in Jagannath Puri



Unknown photographer.

Deity of Shiva at the ISKCON Swamibag temple in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Shiva Invited Prabhupada



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Lord Shiva invited my *guru-mahārāja* here to Bhubaneswar. In *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.3.54), Lord Shiva, who is *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ*, the greatest *vaiṣṇava*, says:

> *pañca-bhautika-dehā ye martyaloka-nivāsinaḥ*
> *bhagavad-bhakti-rasikā namasyā mādṛśām sadā*

> Although a *sādhu-vaiṣṇava*, who relishes devotional service to the Lord, has taken birth in this material world in a material body composed of five gross elements, still he is worshiped by me, Lord Shiva. I am not so dear to the Lord as he is.

So, when Prabhupada developed some sulkiness, *abhimāna*, that stopped him from coming to Odisha, Lord Shiva repeatedly requested of him, "Please, Bhaktivedanta Swami, please come here." At last, he accepted. He came to Shiva-*kṣetra* [Bhubaneswar], the entrance to *Puruṣottama-kṣetra, Śrī-kṣetra*, Jagannath Puri Dham. Prabhupada came and thought to build a Krishna Balaram temple here. Now his desire has taken shape. One who comes to this *kṣetra* must first pass through the entrance. Then he can enter into the *nabha*,



Unknown artist.

A young gopi worships Lord Shiva



Vintage painting by an nknown artist.

Lord Shiva's form with five heads

the middle portion, and see Jagannath. Lord Shiva welcomes you at the door.

Srila Prabhupada did not think to build a temple in Jagannath Puri. He wanted to construct one at the entrance, in Bhubaneswar Dham. This is significant. Mahaprabhu entered *Śrī-kṣetra* through this same gate. He visited the Lingaraj temple of Lord Shiva. He and the devotees did *kīrtana* and danced there. They bathed in Bindu Sarovara, the place where Shivaji called all the celestial rivers to gather. Mahaprabhu taught how Lord Shiva is a great devotee. Shiva is *kṣetra-pāla*, the guardian of the *dhāma*. Before entering, you must see him and get his permission. Otherwise you cannot enter. So one should beg his permission. And Shivaji will welcome the devotee with folded hands, saying "Please come and see Jagannath."

In Mathura *kṣetra* there are nine *kṣetra-palas*, Shivas. Those who do Mathura-Vrindavan *parikramā* visit those Shiva temples and beg permission to enter and to circumambulate the *dhāma*. It is an important principle. If you avoid Lord Shiva, you commit offense because he is a *vaiṣṇava*. None of your *dhāma-vāsa*, residence in the *dhāma*, and *parikramā*, circumambulation, will be fruitful, because of that *aparādha*.

Among the nine Shivas of Vraja is Gopiswar Mahadeva. The *gopīs* themselves offer worship to Lord Shiva because he is *vaiṣṇava*. If he showers his mercy, then one can receive Krishna. The poet Krishnadas writes, *jaya jaya gopīśvara vṛndāvana mājha*. So we should pay respect to that very powerful devotee. Shiva is *āśutoṣa*, easily satisfied. He has a magnanimous heart.



Respect to Shiva and Krishna

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's
Śāstra-vākya, *Various Statements of* Śāstra

gopālaṁ pūjayed yas tu nindayed anya-devatām
astu tāvat paro dharmaḥ pūrva-dharmo 'pi naśyati

If a person who worships Krishna criticizes the *devatās,* whatever dharma he has accomplished is destroyed, what to speak of attaining dharma in the future. (*Gautamīya-tantra* 33.84 quoted in *Bhakti-sandarbha* 106.62. Translation by Bhanu Swami.)

harir eva sadārādhyaḥ sarva-deveśvareśvaraḥ
itare brahma-rudrādyā nāvajñeyāḥ kadācana

Lord Hari is worshipable by all. He is the controller of the great controllers of the universe. Nevertheless, one should never disrespect Brahma, Shiva, or the other great souls. (*Padma Purāṇa* quoted in *Bhakti-sandarbha* 106.61.)

kṛṣṇāc chivasya bhedekṣā mahā-doṣa-karī matā
āgo bhagavatā svasmin kṣamyate na śive kṛtam

To consider Lord Shiva different from Krishna is a serious spiritual deviation. The Personality of Godhead tolerates offenses against himself but not against Lord Shiva. (*Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛtam* 1.2.86)

Bibliography

— Jiva Goswami. *Śrī Bhakti-sandarbha.* English translation by Bhanu Swami. Sri Vaikuntha Enterprises. Chennai. 2018.

— Sanatan Goswami. *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta.* Translated from the original Sanskrit, with a summary of the author's *Dig-darśinī* commentary, by Gopiparanadhana Das. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles. 2002.






Vintage painting by an unknown artist.

Lord Shiva with one of his demon followers

He even accepts those things that everyone else has rejected. He is known as Bhutanath, the lord of ghosts. The ghosts, demons, *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas* all come to Lord Shiva. Poisonous snakes are ornaments on his body. He is a very wonderful personality.

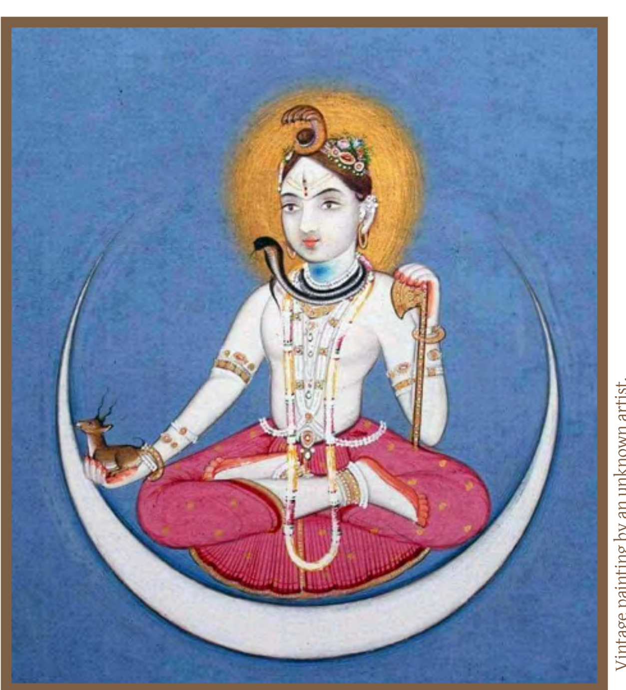
What happened to Daksha when he disrespected Lord Shiva? His head was cut off. It was *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. Pay respect to Lord Shiva. Beg for his mercy: "Please grant me *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Please shower down your mercy, O *vaiṣṇava*."

The climate here is very nice, and so is the water. Kedar Gauri water from Bhubaneswar is especially famous. Srila Prabhupada took that water every day he was here and got some relief for his health. During his last days, when he was very ill in Vrindavan, he asked for that water, so we sent some.

Devotee: He was drinking the water here or from somewhere else when he was in Bhubaneswar?

Gour Govinda Swami: We were bringing Kedar Gauri water here daily. It is in old Bhubaneswar near the famous Lingaraj temple. Many other temples are there as well with many Shiva *liṅgas*. Kedar is one of the Shiva *liṅgas*. Gauri is his wife. That temple is known as Kedar Gauri. There is a well in the temple compound and people take water from there. It is very good for the stomach.

— From a darshan in Bhubaneswar, 13 March 1991. Printed in *My Revered Spiritual Master*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. 2007.


Vintage painting by an unknown artist.

Lord Shiva is very merciful and very easily satisfied

Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

A free bi-monthly service provided by Gopal Jiu Publications

Subscribe at our website: www.gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a section of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Write to us:
bindu@gopaljiu.org
Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

Subscribe to Bindu:
https://gopaljiu.org/krishna-kathamrta-bindu/